

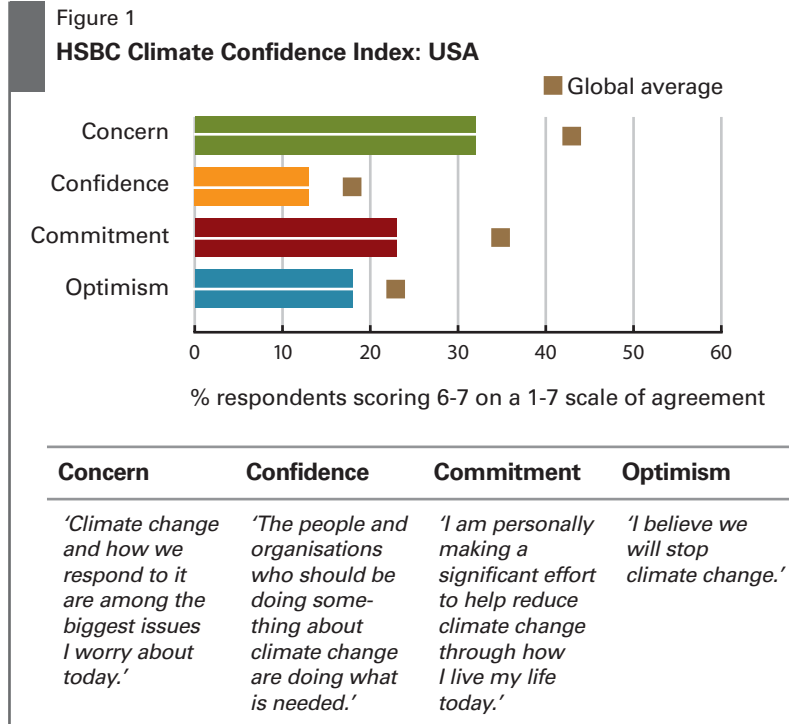
HSBC Climate Confidence Index 2007: country profile

USA

The HSBC Climate Confidence Index 2007 shows the US as the most confident and optimistic of the developed economies, although the moderate level of concern about climate change is in line with others in Europe. While in most economies concern increases with age, in the US it is significantly higher in the under-35s. It is also a politicised issue.

The US, uniquely among the economies surveyed, has the profile of a sceptical optimist (Figure 1): moderate concern and personal commitment in line with the Western European economies researched, but with levels of confidence and optimism significantly higher than in Europe.

Among other world issues



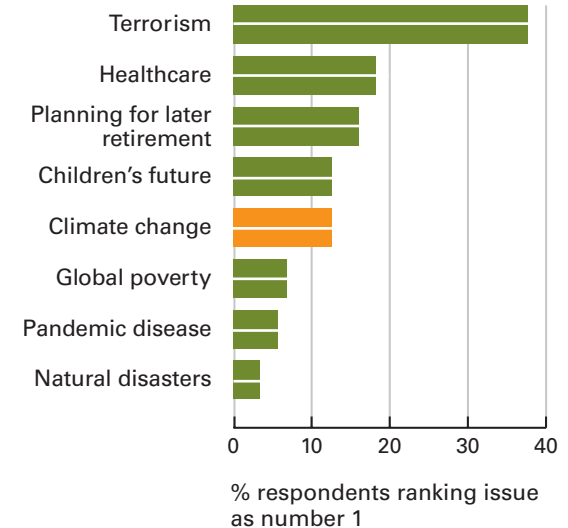
tested, climate change is the joint fourth with another issue in the US – the only economy surveyed in which climate change ranks below number three. Greater concerns are those with perhaps more immediate impact: terrorism, healthcare, planning for later retirement, and children's future (Figure 2).

The US is unusual in the

age profile of those showing concern and engagement with the issue of climate change. In other economies researched, concern tends to increase slightly with age. In the US, it declines. All four metrics on the index score significantly higher for the under-35s than for older groups (Figure 3).

While people's statements of overall personal

Figure 2
Climate change is joint fourth with another world issue in the US



commitment are comparable with Europe, more specific statements about how much people do today show some difference. Around 15% of Americans say they do not know what to do to help reduce climate change, compared with only 8% in Europe (the UK, France and Germany). At the top of the scale, 33% of people in the

US say they already do as much as they can, compared with 42% in Europe.

Our research in the US was conducted in four cities: New York, Miami, San Francisco and Chicago. Attitudes in the four are broadly similar: differences between them are small compared with differences between the US and other economies, so

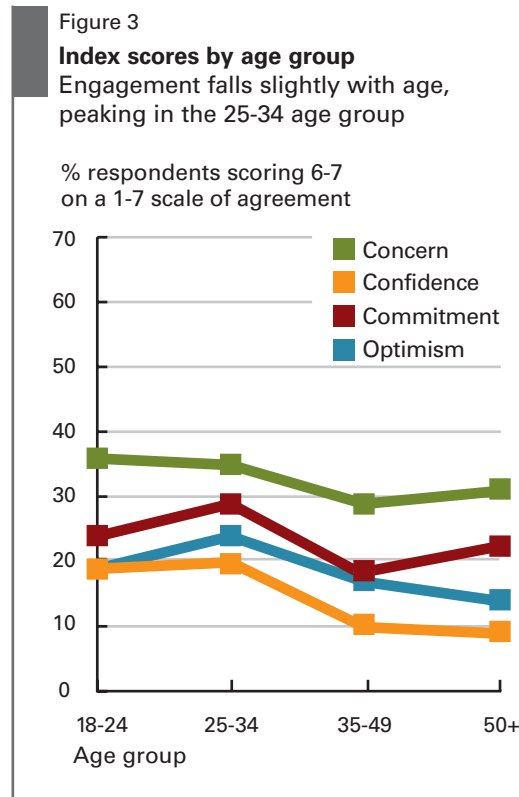
talking about a US profile is meaningful.

On all four of the metrics in the index, New York scores the highest, and Chicago the lowest (Figure 4). The biggest difference is in overall optimism: in New York, 24% of people ‘believe we will stop climate change’, compared with only 11% in Chicago, despite a higher level of concern in New York. Miami is the second highest-scoring city in terms of concern and optimism, but San Francisco scores higher in terms of what is being done: both confidence in what is being done today and in personal commitment.

The ranking of climate change among other world issues is highest in Miami (third after terrorism and planning for later retirement), but it is moderate in all cities.

Terrorism dominates the issues less in San Francisco than elsewhere, but this is compensated by wider concern about healthcare and planning for later retirement, so climate change still ranks in fourth place.

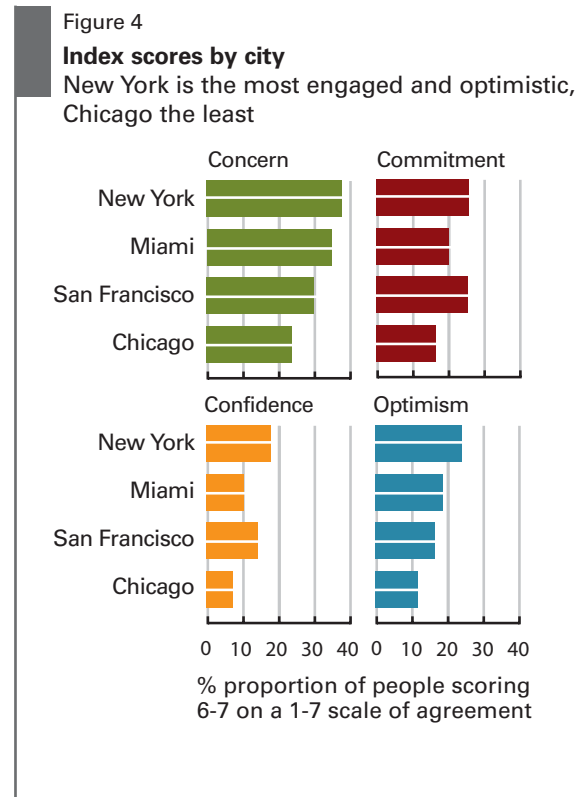
Despite its high level of



concern, New York has the most people who say they do not know what to do to help reduce climate change – 18% compared with 11% in San Francisco.

In the US, reactions to the issue of climate change are deeply linked to domestic politics in a way not observed elsewhere. Unprompted comments are forthright and

adversarial on both sides of the debate. People complain that they genuinely do not know what to believe.



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